

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested. Claims 1-41 are pending. Claims 1, 14, 16, 19, 21-26, 29, 31, 35, and 38-41 are amended by way of the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-41 were objected to; and Claim 41 was rejected as unpatentable over Peterson et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 20040014250, hereinafter "Peterson") in view of Meeks et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,392,749, hereinafter "Meeks"). Claims 1-40 were allowed.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the allowance of Claims 1-40.

With regard to the note regarding the specification, the specification is amended herewith to include the current status of the cited applications.

With regard to the objection to Claims 1-41, Claims 1, 14, and 24 are amended to recite manufacturing process runs.

Claim 1 also recites "a detecting unit configured to ... generate a radiation level signal based at least on a strength of the detected portion of the radiation beam." This is believed to be definite, as one skilled in the art would recognize what other factors the generation of a signal level could depend on. Accordingly, the pending language is believed to be in compliance with 37 C.F.R. §1.75(a).

Claim 16 is amended to recite "means for determining a replacement status of the component" as recited in Claim 14.

Claims 19, 22, and 23 are amended to replace "the controlling means" with "means for determining."

Claim 21 is amended to recite "at least one of the emitting means."

Claim 25 is amended to recite "a strength of said radiation level signal."

Claim 26 is amended to recite “determining a replacement status further comprises,” “repeating the determining a thickness of the component step,” and “the thickness of the component.”

Claims 35 and 38 are amended to recite “determining a thickness of the component.”

Claim 29 is amended to recite “a first manufacturing process.”

Claim 31 is amended to recite “a second manufacturing process.”

Claim 39 is amended to recite “the step of measuring an initial thickness of the component.”

Claims 40 and 41 are amended to recite “A system for identifying a component” and “A method for identifying a component,” respectively.

Accordingly, Claims 1-41 are believed to be in compliance with 37 C.F.R. §1.75(a).

With regard to the rejection of Claim 41 as unpatentable over Peterson in view of Meeks, that rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 41 recites in part, “identifying at least one of a manufacturer, a serial number, and a part type of the component based at least on the initial thickness of the component.”

The outstanding Official Action conceded that Peterson does not teach or suggest such a feature, citing Meeks as describing this feature.¹ Meeks describes a method and apparatus for determining the thickness of a layer of carbon overcoat on a thin film disk. Meeks states that “Manufacturers make thin film disks with a known carbon overcoat thickness.”² However, it is respectfully submitted that Meeks does not describe that *different manufacturers use different thicknesses of carbon overcoat*. If each manufacturer uses the same thickness of carbon overcoat, then determining the thickness of the carbon overcoat *cannot* determine the manufacturer. Thus, as Meeks does not teach or suggest that manufacturers use different thicknesses of carbon overcoat, Meeks cannot teach or suggest

¹See the outstanding Office Action at page 5, lines 9-14.

²Meeks, column 19, lines 7-8.

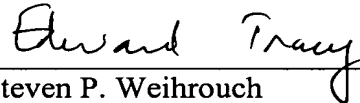
Application No. 10/767,347
Reply to Office Action of July 7, 2006

“identifying at least one of a manufacturer, a serial number, and a part type of the component based at least on the initial thickness of the component,” as recited in Claim 41. Thus, Claim 41 is patentable over Peterson in view of Meeks.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the foregoing comments, it is respectfully submitted that the invention defined by Claims 1-41 patentably distinguishes over the cited art. The present application is therefore believed to be in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Steven P. Weihrouch
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 32,829

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 06/04)

Edward Tracy
Registration No. 47,998

I:\ATTY\ET\245045US\245045US-AMD10.7.06.DOC